

Agenda Item	14
Report No	RES/26/26

The Highland Council

Committee: Corporate Resources

Date: 04 June 2026

Report Title: Corporate Service – Performance Monitoring Q4 2025/26

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides Members with the Q4 2025/26 performance monitoring position for the Corporate Cluster.

1.2 This report provides the following performance information:

- Corporate Indicators.
- Contribution to the Performance Plan.
- Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) out with the Performance Plan.
- Service Plan progress.
- Service updates out with the Corporate Indicators or Service Plan.

Additional performance information such as longer-term trend analysis and comparisons against Highland Council's family group average as well as the national picture is available via the [Local Government Benchmarking Data](#) if required.

1.3 The content and structure are intended to:

- assist Member scrutiny and performance management;
- inform decision making to aid continuous improvement, and
- provide transparency and accessibility.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Scrutinise and **note** the performance information for the Corporate Cluster.
- ii. **Note** the change to FOI reporting to align with Chief Officer structure.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource – there are no resource implications arising as a direct consequence of this report.

- 3.2 Legal – this report contributes to the Council’s statutory duties to report performance and secure best value in terms of Section 1(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1992, and Section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, respectively.

For the provision of welfare support, the Council has a legal duty to provide such services for specified groups, which, as detailed in the Welfare Budget, includes for example the outsourced services delivered by Citizens Advice. These duties are specified in the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

- 3.3 Risk – there is a risk that the ongoing cost of living impacts on households will place pressure on the Welfare Budget.
- 3.4 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – there are no immediate health and safety implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 Gaelic – there are no implications arising as a direct result of this report.

4. Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children’s Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is a monitoring report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5. Service Performance - Corporate Indicators

- 5.1 Service performance in relation to Absence, Complaints, FOIs, and Invoice Payments are set out in the following sub-sections.

5.2 Corporate Cluster Sickness Absence

- 5.2.1 Staff absence is a nationally benchmarked indicator. Effective absence management supports staff, maintains productivity, and contributes to the Council’s benchmarked performance. From Q2 and Q3 2025/2026 onwards figures are shown split by Chief Officer to reflect the new organisational structure.

Average number working days per employee lost through sickness absence

Average Days Lost	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26	Q1 26/27	Q2 26/27	Q3 26/27	Q4 26/27	Q1 27/28
Business Solutions	2.27	3.19	2.24					
Corporate Finance	1.67	1.87	2.28					
Legal and Corporate Governance	2.11	2.15	2.39					
HR and Communication	3.50	2.08	1.29					
Revenues and Commercialisation	2.75	3.08	3.52					
Highland Council	3.02	4.09	3.97					

Median absence can give a more accurate illustration of the length of absence most staff record, as a small number of long-term absences can significantly increase the mean, particularly in smaller services. A full breakdown of median absence is available in **Appendix 1**.

5.3 Council-wide Sickness Absence

- 5.3.1 The average (mean) days absence across the whole organisation for Q4 2025/26 is 3.97 days when based on full-time equivalents, or 3.93 if based on headcount (ie including part-time staff).

The median of all sickness absences is 2 days. The median including staff with no sickness absence is 0 days.

Detailed sickness absence data for Clusters are reported to their respective strategic committees, with comparison to overall The Highland Council position.

5.4 Service Complaints Response Times

- 5.4.1 Monitoring complaints provides important feedback which can facilitate decision making and service design. Each Cluster is responsible for responding to complaints which are issued on their behalf by the Complaints and Information Team (CIT).

5.4.2

Service Complaints - Corporate Services Cluster

Number of closed complaints and the % compliant with the legislative timescale

Frontline Resolution within 5 days

	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
ICT Services	0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0	
Performance & Governance	26	100 %	17	35 %	0		2	100 %	0		1	100 %	1	100 %	2	100 %
Resources & Finance	15	80 %	3	100 %	19	89 %	25	76 %	29	93 %	21	95 %	19	95 %	39	95 %
Highland Council	219	84 %	196	78 %	155	88 %	183	87 %	174	91 %	223	90 %	200	85 %	262	82 %

Investigation Resolution within 20 days

	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
ICT Services	0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0	
Performance & Governance	2	50 %	2	50 %	3	0 %	1	0 %	1	100 %	0		1	100 %	0	
Resources & Finance	8	88 %	36	69 %	8	63 %	4	0 %	3	33 %	8	38 %	1	0 %	2	100 %
Highland Council	86	47 %	101	57 %	90	42 %	71	51 %	68	47 %	86	40 %	94	55 %	110	51 %

Escalated Resolution within 20 days

	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
ICT Services	0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0	
Performance & Governance	0		1	100 %	0		1	100 %	1	0 %	0		1	100 %	0	
Resources & Finance	3	67 %	3	67 %	2	50 %	0		3	0 %	4	75 %	3	67 %	7	14 %
Highland Council	47	32 %	28	50 %	26	46 %	34	44 %	30	33 %	27	26 %	22	27 %	31	23 %

5.4.3 For Resources & Finance, some were escalated due to the complex nature of these complaints, which required both technical and legal considerations, involving cross-Service subject matter experts.

5.5 Service Freedom of Information (FOI) Response Times

5.5.1 FOI requests are co-ordinated by CIT in collaboration with Service teams which collate the information relevant to the request. From Q4 2025/2026 onwards figures are shown split by Chief Officer to reflect the new organisational structure.

5.5.2

Service Freedom of Information Requests - Corporate Resources Committee

% of FOIs closed compliant with the legislative timescale

% FOIs Compliant - Business Solutions Quarterly	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
	16	75 %	19	89 %	15	73 %	16	75 %	16	94 %	14	79 %	14	100 %	19	89 %
% FOIs Compliant - Corporate Finance Quarterly	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
	15	80 %	10	50 %	9	44 %	7	71 %	7	86 %	12	33 %	8	63 %	11	55 %
% FOIs Compliant - Legal and Corporate Governance Quarterly	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
	45	78 %	54	89 %	53	83 %	48	77 %	50	92 %	49	90 %	65	82 %	65	71 %
% FOIs Compliant - HR and Communications Quarterly	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
	21	86 %	21	71 %	28	75 %	37	68 %	33	73 %	36	78 %	29	76 %	35	46 %
% FOIs Compliant - Revenues and Commercialisation Quarterly	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
	15	93 %	24	92 %	19	84 %	35	80 %	36	81 %	27	81 %	23	87 %	19	74 %
% FOIs Compliant - Highland Council (Quarterly)	Q1 24/25		Q2 24/25		Q3 24/25		Q4 24/25		Q1 25/26		Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26	
	512	81 %	481	76 %	570	73 %	617	71 %	577	81 %	601	77 %	581	73 %	578	65 %

5.5.3 All teams within the Corporate Services Cluster continue to take steps to monitor performance and to identify further improvement actions. FOIs can vary both in volume and complexity and this can impact response times.

5.6 Corporate Cluster Invoice Payment Times

5.6.1 These indicators measure the Council's efficiency at paying invoices within 30 days and 10 days of receipt as a percentage of all invoices paid. While payment of invoices within 30 days of receipt is a Statutory Performance Indicator, the Council also monitors the number of invoices paid within 10 days of receipt. The targets for performance are 95% and 77% respectively for 30-days and 10-days.

5.6.2

Service Invoice Payment Times - Corporate Service Cluster

Invoice Payment within 30 days	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26
ICT Services	76.7 %	86.9 %	81.0 %	84.0 %	92.0 %	94.2 %	97.0 %	91.5 %
Performance & Governance	97.5 %	97.3 %	96.5 %	88.3 %	93.0 %	95.4 %	96.5 %	97.2 %
Resources & Finance	79.9 %	88.3 %	96.4 %	93.3 %	96.9 %	95.4 %	94.3 %	95.1 %
Highland Council	87.7 %	91.4 %	92.9 %	92.9 %	93.0 %	94.8 %	94.3 %	95.2 %

Invoice Payment less than 10 days	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26	Q4 25/26
ICT Services	41.7 %	60.0 %	54.8 %	48.7 %	49.1 %	56.5 %	78.8 %	81.4 %
Performance & Governance	81.3 %	79.8 %	82.6 %	56.9 %	83.6 %	82.1 %	85.4 %	84.5 %
Resources & Finance	43.6 %	53.7 %	68.0 %	57.7 %	75.6 %	78.1 %	75.5 %	64.9 %
Highland Council	57.0 %	68.5 %	63.8 %	63.3 %	64.7 %	72.5 %	72.3 %	69.6 %

- 5.6.3 For this 30-day measure, performance exceeds target. For the 10-day measure, performance also exceeds target with the exception of Resources & Finance which does report an improvement on the prior year position.
- 5.6.4 Officers continue to review processes with the aim of achieving further improvements across Clusters.
- 5.7 **Council Invoice Payments – SPI Owner**
- 5.7.1 The Council-wide Q4 performance for payments within 30 Days was 95.2% for invoice processing, compared with 92.9% for the same period in 2024/25. For invoice payments less than 10 days, Q4 performance was 69.6%, which is an improvement on the Q4 position in 2024/25 of 63.3%. Council-wide performance is provided in **Appendix 2** to this report.
- 5.7.2 Building on positive performance, the Revenues & Commercialisation section continue to work with Chief Officers to identify further steps that may be taken to improve performance at the various stages in the overall process.
6. **Contribution to the Performance Plan**

All Performance Plan elements, including relevant Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs), under the Corporate Cluster have been included in the Strategic Outcomes below.

6.1

Corporate Cluster: Contribution to the Performance Plan										
Strategic Priority 1 Fair & Caring Highland			Period	Data	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Avg days to process Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reductions - Changes of Circumstance CP1.02			FY 23/24	1.6	FY 24/25	1.5	FY 25/26		2.0	annual update August
Avg days to process Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reductions - New Claims CP1.02			FY 23/24	10.0	FY 24/25	10.6	FY 25/26		10.0	annual update August
No. newly enrolled and upskilled via THC Modern Apprenticeships per year CP1.03			FY 23/24	100	FY 24/25	81	FY 25/26			annual update July
No. Gaelic culture reports promoted through press releases and social media CP1.12			FY 23/24	73	FY 24/25	41	FY 25/26	101	53	
Culture and heritage events promoted through press and social media CP1.12			Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26			Completed Q1 25/26
Strategic Priority 2 Resilient and Sustainable Communities			Period	Data	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
% of procurement spend on local enterprises CP2.11 ECON04			FY 23/24	51.80 %	FY 24/25	42.00 %	FY 25/26			annual update Dec

6.2

Strategic Priority 5 A Resilient and Sustainable Council			Period	Data	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Council Tax - Annual % received CP5.10 CORP07			FY 23/24	95.89 %	FY 24/25	95.65 %	FY 25/26			annual update
Sickness Days Lost per Employee CP5.01			FY 23/24	11.39	FY 24/25	13.17	FY 25/26			annual update August
Identify and agree Corporate Training priorities: improve ERD recording CP5.01			Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 25/26	No Significant Progress	Q4 25/26	Completed		Closed Q4 25/26
Identify and agree Corporate Training priorities: achieve compliance with training CP5.01			Q2 25/26	Some Slippage	Q3 25/26	Some Slippage	Q4 25/26	Completed		Closed Q4 25/26
ERDs being completed - DCE CP5.01			Q2 25/26		Q3 25/26		Q4 25/26			Completed Q1 24/25
ERDs being completed - PGV CP5.01			Q2 25/26	On Target	Q3 25/26	Completed	Q4 25/26			Closed Q3 25/26
ERDs being completed - RSF CP5.01			Q2 25/26	On Target	Q3 25/26	Completed	Q4 25/26			Closed Q3 25/26
No. new Modern Apprenticeships/Paid Placements and Youth Traineeships CP5.02			FY 23/24	177	FY 24/25	146	FY 25/26			
% of indicators in OHS Strategy with green rating CP5.01			FY 23/24	60 %	FY 24/25	80 %	FY 25/26		90 %	
ICT Strategy implemented CP5.04			Q2 25/26	On Target	Q3 25/26	On Target	Q4 25/26	On Target		Due to complete 2027
Digital Strategy implemented CP5.04			Q2 25/26	On Target	Q3 25/26	On Target	Q4 25/26	On Target		Due to complete Q1 27/28

6.3

The Council's ERD performance data has moved to align with Chief Officer structures. A new recording process has also been piloted and will be implemented in the 2026/27 financial year. As such, the current open ERD actions reported by the old service structure will be closed and new indicators developed.

7. Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) Outwith the Performance Plan

7.1

Corporate Service Cluster: SPIs						
SPIs not monitored in Performance Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Benefits Admin costs - Gross cost per Case	FY 24/25	£ 31.48	FY 25/26			annual update August
Cost Procurement Sectn % Net Rev Budget	FY 24/25	% 0.087	FY 25/26			annual update July
Cost NDR collection/chargeable property	FY 24/25	£ 12.74	FY 25/26			annual update August
% income sundry debtors collected during yr	FY 24/25	87.51 %	FY 25/26	69.14 %		annual update
% NDR collected by year end	FY 24/25	97.30 %	FY 25/26			annual update
Trading Standards - business advice - 14 days	FY 24/25	80.20 %	FY 25/26			annual update June
Accident Injury Rate	FY 24/25	162	FY 25/26			annual update June
Cost of Accounting - % Net Rev Budget + HRA	FY 24/25	0.29 %	FY 25/26			annual update August
Overall Council Tax collection level - 5 years	FY 24/25	97.00 %	FY 25/26			annual update
Sickness THC - Non Teachers - Avg working days lost CORP06b	FY 24/25	14.48	FY 25/26	3.90		annual update August
Women managers in top 2% of earners	FY 24/25	49.1 %	FY 25/26	49.4 %		annual update August

7.2 The % of sundry debtors collected during the year reports 69.14% which is a reduction on prior year (87.51%). Ongoing discussions are progressing with a single debtor where on receipt of payment of arrears, would see the collection for 25/26 exceed 90.1%, and therefore higher than prior year.

The target for women managers in top 2% of earners is a three year rolling average and has increased to 49.8%. Therefore, this SPI has moved to amber, despite an increase in our figures.

8. Remaining Service Plan Items – Progress

The dashboards have been updated to remove elements that were previously reported as complete or archived, as well as elements that appear in multiple plans (i.e. in the Performance Plan or as an SPI).

8.1 ICT & Digital Transformation

8.1.1

Digital: Maximising the use of new processes and technology Q3 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Biennial Digital Maturity Assessment	2021 - 2023	2.50	2023 - 2025	2.59	3.00	level 5/5 by 2027

8.1.2

ICT: Provision of robust, secure and sustainable in-house ICT service Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
ICT % customers satisfied - monthly	M11 25/26	97.9 %	M12 25/26	97.8 %	95.0 %	
ICT % service contacts resolved within 24 hrs - monthly	M11 25/26	55.9 %	M12 25/26	56.1 %	56.0 %	
ICT Avg wait time [seconds] for Service Desk contacts - monthly	M11 25/26	39	M12 25/26	28	60	
% windows devices functional and receiving all security updates	Q3 25/26	92	Q4 25/26	93	100	
ICT User Satisfaction % customers satisfied - Annual	FY 24/25	89.29 %	FY 25/26	80.00 %	90.00 %	

As explained in previous quarterly performance reports, the target of 100% compliance for Windows devices receiving all updates is challenging but is still the correct target to aim for. Compliance over 90% is considered to be good, however, compared to industry standards. A small improvement in Q4 compared to Q3 is noted.

8.1.3

ICT: Provision of robust, secure and sustainable in-house ICT service Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Update and test cyber incident response plan	Q3 25/26	Completed	Q4 25/26			Completed Q3 25/26

8.2 Performance and Governance

8.2.1

Legal & Governance: Provide High-Quality Legal Advice and representation Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Monitor Guardianship applications within 30 days	Q3 25/26	94 %	Q4 25/26	100 %	90 %	

8.2.2

Legal & Governance: Tackle Unfair & Unsafe Trading Practices and Assist Business Growth Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Cost of Trading Standards, Money Advice and Citizen Advice per 1000 population ENV05a	FY 24/25	£ 8,749	FY 25/26		£ 10,924	annual update November
Trading Standards - business advice - 14 days	FY 24/25	80.20 %	FY 25/26		77.0 %	annual update June

8.2.3

Communications & Resilience: Internal & External Communications Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Monitor and report Business Continuity training uptake and plan completion	Q3 25/26	On Target	Q4 25/26	On Target		
Report debrief learning in Resilience Group action plans	Q3 25/26	On Target	Q4 25/26	On Target		Review Q4 23/24
Report on and increase overall engagement stats for social media	Q3 25/26	On Target	Q4 25/26	On Target		Reported and published regularly

The completion of Business Continuity Plans has been reopened following closure. This is because Enterprise & Investment, which was previously included within the Housing & Communities and Facilities & Fleet services, is now constituted as a standalone service and requires a separate Business Contnunity Plan. This is on target for completion in June 2026.

8.2.4

Corporate Performance, Audit & Information Governance: Information Governance Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Increase completion of Information Management Training: Elected Members	Q3 25/26	38 %	Q4 25/26	38 %		
Increase completion of Information Management Training: Staff	Q3 25/26	49 %	Q4 25/26	51 %		

8.2.5

Legal & Governance: Effective Governance Arrangements Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Issue Committee papers 10 days prior to meetings	Q3 25/26	85 %	Q4 25/26	76 %		Data expected quarterly

8.3 Resources and Finance

8.3.1

Financial Management Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
Support the Council in achieving and sustaining a financially sustainable position	Q3 25/26	On Target	Q4 25/26	On Target		Due to complete March 27

8.3.2

Joint Procurement Strategy Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/ Update Date
% contracts with community benefits clause included	FY 24/25	65 %	FY 25/26		95 %	Update November
% contracts with carbon reduction clause included	FY 24/25	68 %	FY 25/26			Update November
% Contract Spend - collaborative contracts [exc. frameworks]	FY 24/25	0 %	FY 25/26		10 %	Update November
% Contract Spend - Cat. A or B frameworks	FY 24/25	4 %	FY 25/26		10 %	Update November
Council Spend with Highland Small & Medium sized businesses	FY 24/25	29 %	FY 25/26		30 %	Update November
% contracts with fair work practices included	FY 24/25	80 %	FY 25/26			Update November
Efficiency savings - cashable [% of addressable spend]	FY 24/25	£ 1,979,000	FY 25/26			Update November
% Spend covered by contract	FY 24/25	68.6 %	FY 25/26		80.0 %	Update November

The Annual Procurement report for 2024/25 was considered by this Committee and the updated Contract Standing Orders were approved by Council in March 2026. The Council continues to monitor overall procurement activity and governance through internal Boards and Groups, and also sits on the Strategic Procurement Board alongside Aberdeen-shire and City Councils, to review and monitor shared procurement arrangements and performance. The Annual Procurement Report for 2025/26 is due to be considered by this Committee in November 26 which will include

update on the indicators above, including in relation to community benefits and other associated targets.

8.3.3

People Q4 25/26						
Actions PIs being Monitored in Service Plan	Period	Data	Period	Data	Target Value	Completion/Update Date
Support, monitor and report on completion rates of ERDs/Induction Training/Mandatory Courses	Q3 25/26	No Significant Progress	Q4 25/26	No Significant Progress		Review quarterly

The Learning and Development Strategy also on the agenda sets out a Mandatory Training Improvement Programme and ERD Improvement Programme. New benchmarks and targets will be developed and reported if the Strategy is agreed.

9. ICT, Strategic Improvement & Digital Services

9.1 The table in section 9.2 shows the performance for the in-house ICT Service Desk and support teams for Q4 2025/26. Key points to take from the data are:

- Q4 has shown an improvement in performance overall when compared to Q3.
- Performance in January was impacted by the volume of data centre changes related to the ICT Strategy programme.
- Customer satisfaction has returned to previous excellent levels following the dip in November that was due to planned major infrastructure changes.
- As we moved through the Quarter the volumes of tickets reduced, resulting in a direct benefit in relation to service delivery.

9.2 While performance has improved, we continued to see challenges in the following areas,

- Printers - the move to full cloud printing across the Council was temporarily paused due to the significant number of incidents raised relating mainly to login issues.
- Data centre – migration to new data centre services, an essential element of ICT Strategy implementation, did impact on end users. When issues occurred, they were identified and resolved quickly but there was still impact.

9.3 In relation to printing, significant progress has been made. Following extensive testing and successful pilots in both Corporate and Education we have resumed the roll out of full cloud printing.

9.4

Measure	Target Performance			Actual Performance					
	Description	Red	Amber	Green	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26
% Satisfied customers	85%	85-95%	95%	97.84%	94.29%	97.31%	95.58%	97.89%	97.81%
% Service Desk calls abandoned	10%	10-5%	5%	4.81%	11.84%	9.43%	5.72%	4.78%	2.71%
Average Service Desk wait time	120s	120-60s	60s	36s	71s	59s	36s	39s	28s
% Incidents resolved within 24 hours	50%	50-56%	56%	56.86%	47.07%	46.59%	51.48%	55.90%	56.06%
% Incidents resolved within 7 days	70%	70-80%	80%	79.14%	69.36%	69.12%	72.40%	76.92%	77.03%
% Incidents resolved within 28 days	90%	90-95%	95%	95.50%	95.92%	92.40%	84.12%	95.57%	94.24%
Number of Active Incidents	N/A	N/A	N/A	479	710	621	619	516	361
Number of Active Requests	N/A	N/A	N/A	1788	1972	1530	1858	1755	1831
Number of incidents opened	N/A	N/A	N/A	2135	2823	2072	2336	2094	2214
Number of incidents closed	N/A	N/A	N/A	2200	2598	2170	2336	2188	2360
Number of requests opened	N/A	N/A	N/A	2505	2316	1638	2322	2179	2237
Number of requests closed	N/A	N/A	N/A	2363	2072	1620	2348	2224	2059
Number of Chromebook repairs opened	N/A	N/A	N/A	332	566	389	450	494	540
Number of Chromebook repairs closed	N/A	N/A	N/A	419	413	236	654	528	577

9.5

The Wipro contract performance is measured by a set of KPIs as shown in the table below. These KPIs have been measured from April 2022 – the point at which the majority of service transitioned in-house. The measures are largely technical and relate to management of infrastructure in the data centre. Figures are given for December 25 to February 26. Data is not available for March 26 as discussions are underway with Wipro to determine which of these measures will still be relevant going forward, in the context that much of the data centre service is no longer a Wipro responsibility. Further detail on the changes to the data centre are provided in a separate report to this Committee covering delivery of the ICT

Strategy. For future quarterly performance reports a new reduced set of KPIs will be presented.

9.6

S.No'	SLA	Target Performance Level	Dec'25 SLA	Jan'26 SLA	Feb'26 SLA	Service Points	RAG
KPI 01	Severity 1 Incident resolution	n	0	0	0	0	↑
KPI 02	Severity 2 Incident resolution	n	0	0	0	0	↑
KPI 03	Severity 3 Incident resolution	95%	100%	NA	NA	0	↑
KPI 04	Severity 4 Incident resolution	95%	100%	100%	100%	0	↑
KPI 05	Number of Severity 1 Incidents - Rolling Three months	3	0	0	0	0	↑
KPI-06	Wintel Server software release	5	0	0	0	0	↑
KPI-07	Wintel Database system software release	1	0	0	0	0	↑
KPI-08	Infrastructure availability	99.90%	100%	100%	100%	0	↑
KPI-09	Server Patching	100.00%	100%	100%	100%	0	↑
KPI-10	System Backups	100%	100%	100%	100%	0	↑
KPI-11	Core Infrastructure software	100%	100%	100%	100%	0	↑
KPI 12	Catalogue Implementation including IMACs	95%	100%	100%	100%	0	↑
KPI 13	IMAC Request – Impact Assessment	95%	NA	NA	NA	-	-
KPI 14	Asset Register Accuracy	4	100%	100%	100%	0	↑
KPI 15	Vulnerability scans, health checks and penetration testing	100%	100%	NA	NA	-	-

10. Resources and Finance

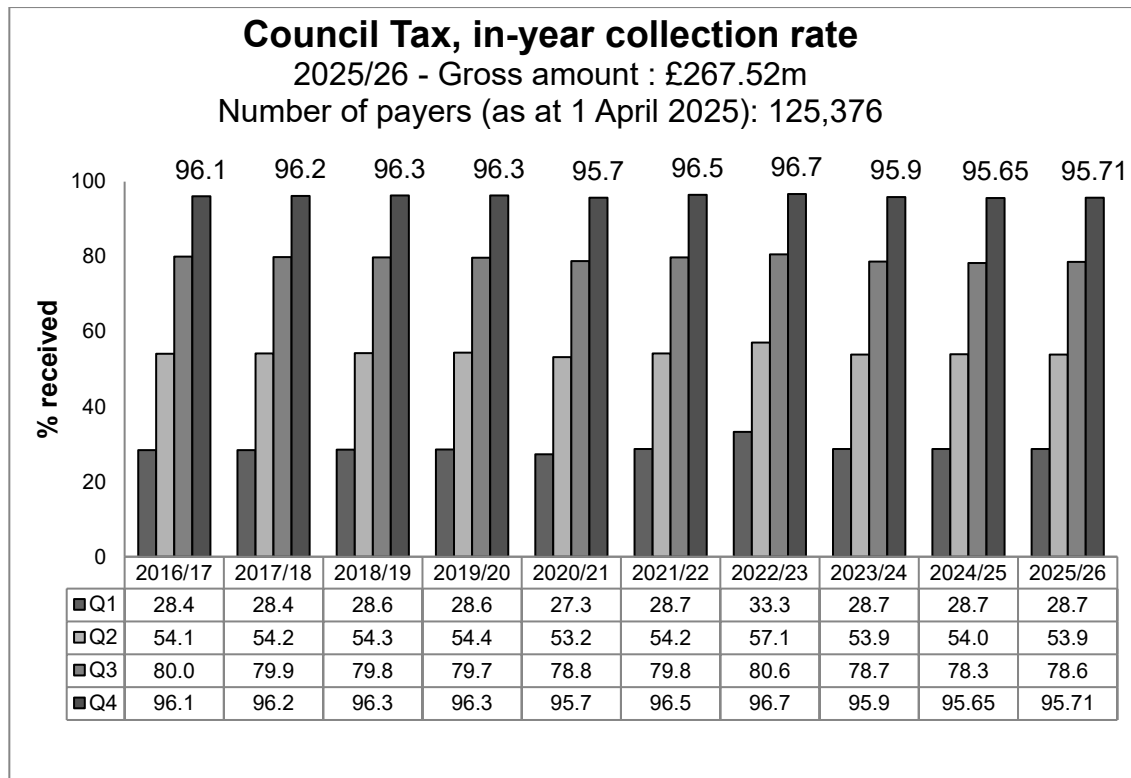
10.1 Council Tax In-Year Collection Rate

10.1.1 A collection rate of 95.71% is reported for Q4 2025/26 which is slightly ahead on the collection rate as for Q4 2024/25 which was 95.65%.

10.1.2 Council Tax contributes around 19.8% of the Council's General Fund and is used to bridge the difference between the block grant and the Council's estimated expenditure. There is therefore a sharp focus on council tax collections' performance and actions to mitigate performance fluctuations. For example, Direct Debits now make up 75.53% of council tax bill payments (Q4), which is higher than the performance for the comparable period last year, which was at 75.06%, representing 86.20% of Council Tax receipts. Direct Debit continues to be the Council's preferred payment method as it is secure and efficient, and convenient for taxpayers.

10.1.3 Direct debit payments and the value of receipts support collections performance, reduce bank charges resulting in cost avoidance, and enable the Council to better predict future income levels, which are important for treasury management and financial planning purposes.

10.1.4



10.1.5 The number of Council Tax payers included in the above bar chart shows the position as at 1 April 2025. As new builds come onto the market and are made available for ownership, private rented and social housing; and as properties transfer between Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates, there is a natural movement in the tax base and number of Council Tax payers throughout the year. The annual billing position is therefore used year on year to provide trend data and to develop business intelligence. Having such rich data, helps to inform improved performance and decision making.

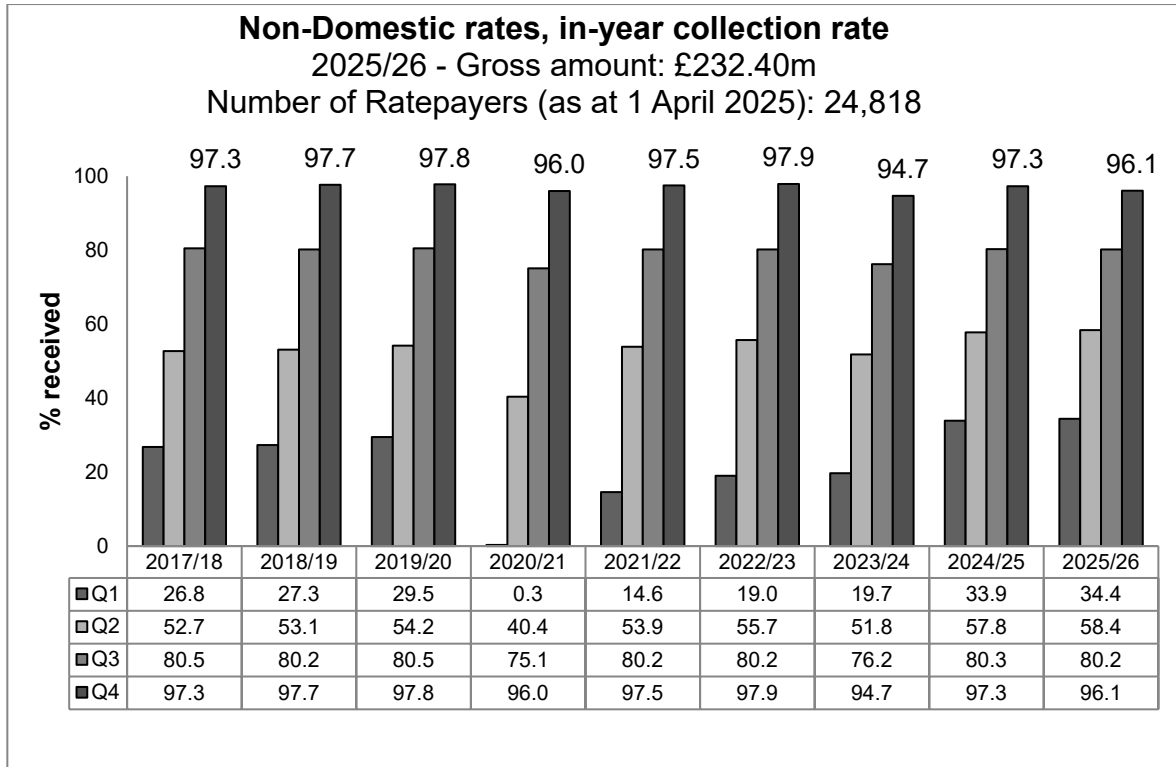
10.2 **Non-Domestic Rates In-Year Collection Rate**

10.2.1 The Council’s total revenue funding provided by the Scottish Government is made up of 3 components: General Revenue Grant (GRG); Distributable Non-Domestic Rate Income (NDR); and specific ring-fenced grants. NDR contributes around 20.2% of the Council’s general fund.

10.2.2 Economic volatility is very quickly evident from fluctuations in Non-Domestic Rates income and underlines the importance of understanding and acting upon the trend information detailed in the table below. Keeping abreast and responding to external influences continue to be an important focus for the Revenues Team.

10.2.3 The collection rate for Q4 of 96.1% shows a decrease when compared with the same period in the previous year of 97.3%. The Non-Domestic Rates outturn has been impacted by several large rateable valued properties being recently added to the valuation roll; this income will be collected during 2026/27. The Non-Domestic Rates team continue to identify potential entitlement to relief and to progress recovery in accordance with legislative timescales.

10.2.4



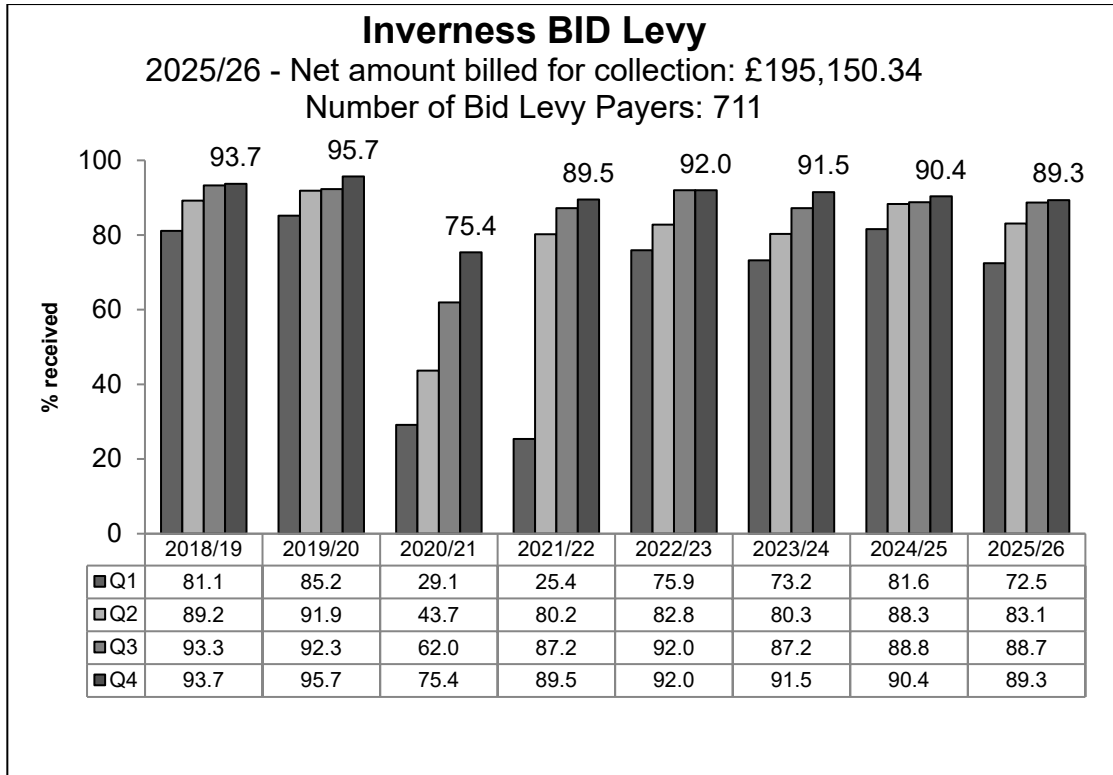
11. Business Improvement Districts (BID)

11.1 The Revenues Team is responsible for managing the administration and collection of the 5 BIDs currently operating within Highland and for the recovery of the associated annual administrative costs from each BID. Officers continue to progress billing and recovery of each BID in accordance with planned annual schedules.

11.2 When monitoring collection performance for each BID, Members will wish to note that billing for the Inverness, Inverness & Loch Ness Tourism and Dornoch BID levies was undertaken in line with financial years, i.e. April-June is Q1. The Nairn BID billing year commences in October and the Dornoch BID billing year commences March each financial year. For the Fort William BID, the billing year commences 1st December each year.

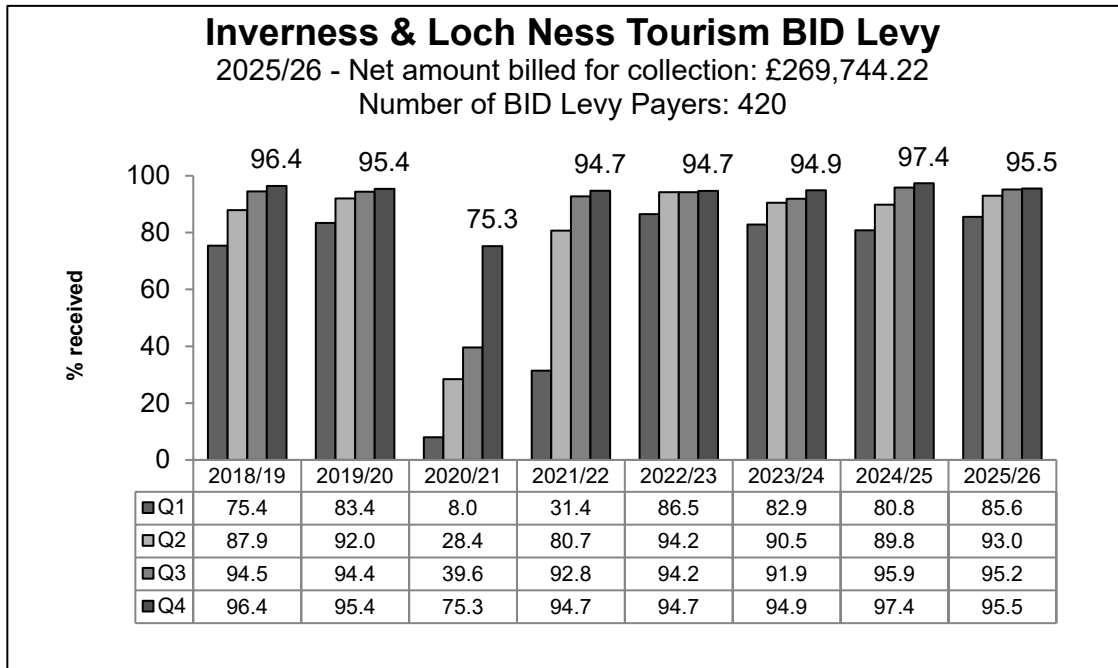
12. Inverness Bid Levy

12.1 The Q4 performance is just slightly lower when compared with the previous year. The Revenues Team continue to pursue the outstanding sums with the aim of maximising collections.



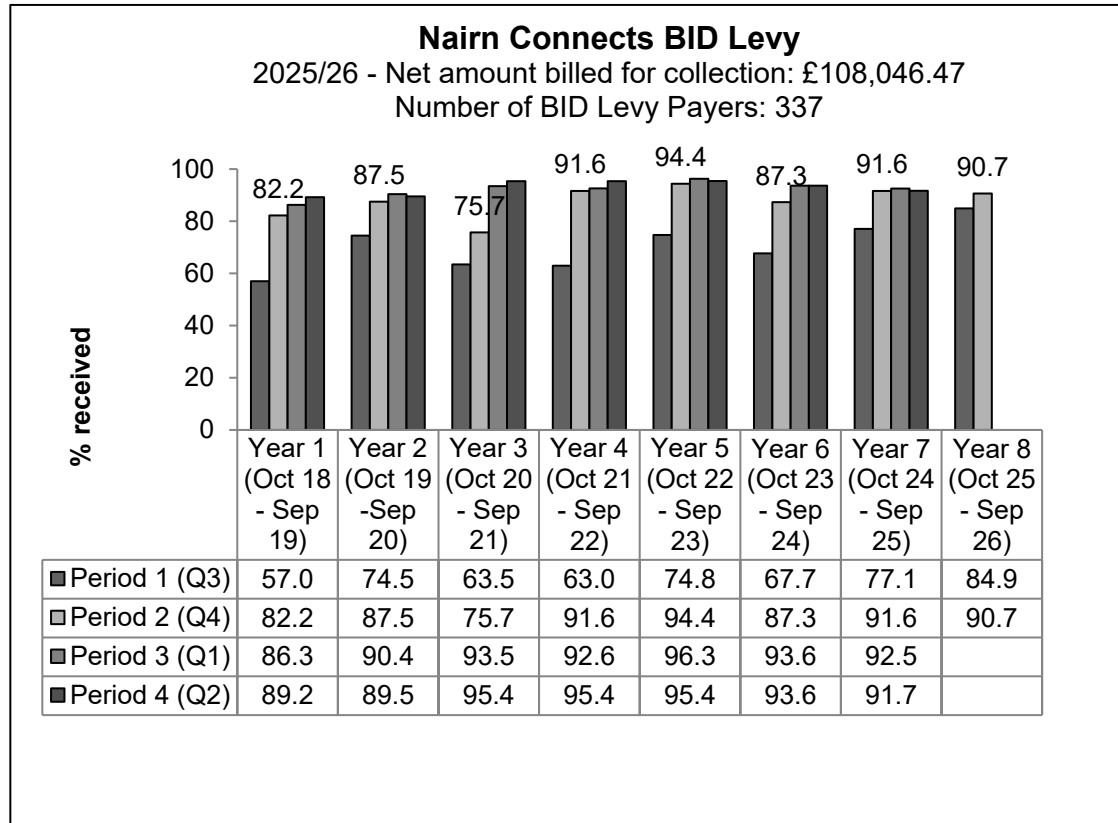
12.2 Inverness & Loch Ness Tourism BID Levy

By the end of Q4, 95.5% of the BID levies have been paid which is down on the high performance in Q4 2025/26, but still showing strongly compared to other years for the Inverness & Loch Ness Tourism BID. Recovery action continues as planned to maximise incomes.



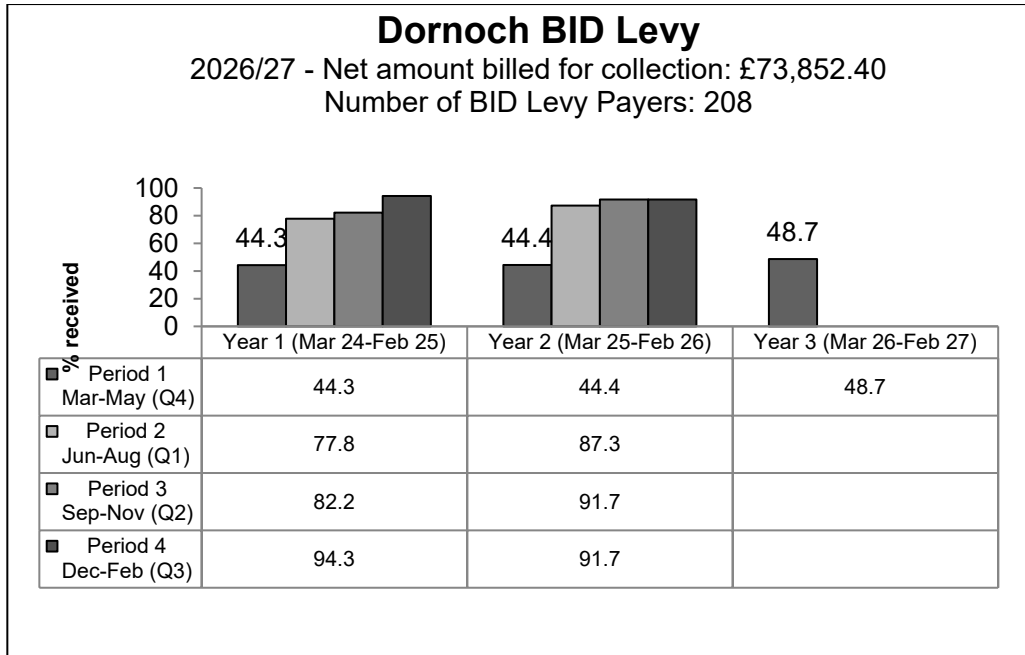
12.3 Nairn Connects BID Levy

The Nairn Connects billing year commences 1 October each year. Performance in Period 2 (Q4) shows a collection rate of 90.7%, compared to 91.6% for the same period in 2024/25. Recoveries continue as scheduled.



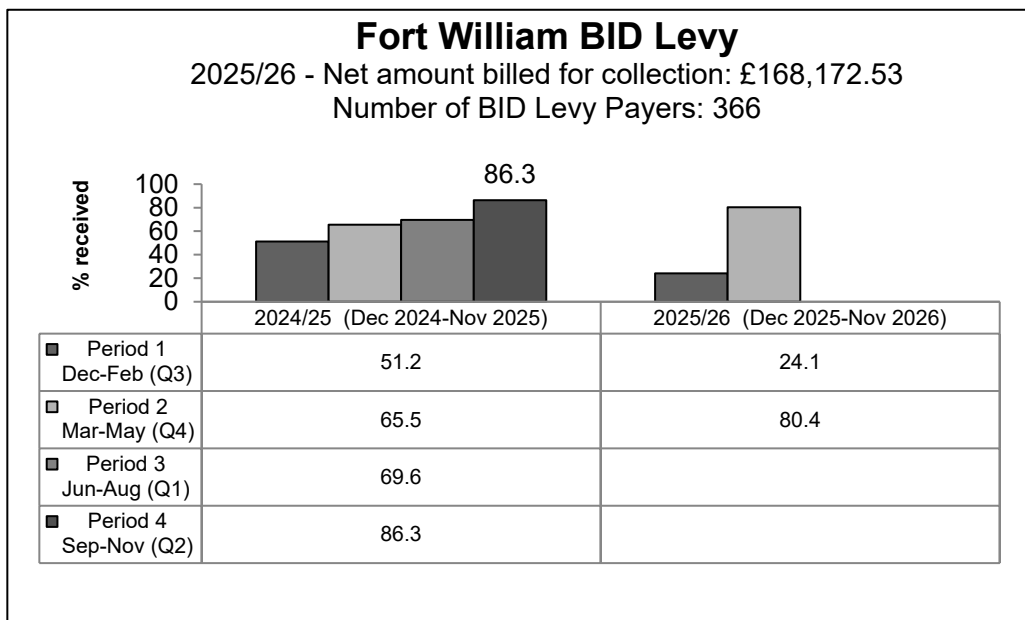
12.4 Dornoch BID Levy

BID bills were issued as planned on February 2026 with an annual billing period of 1 March 2026 to 28 February 2027. The collection rate reflects the position as at 31/03/2026 (48.7%). Recovery actions continue.



12.5 Fort William BID Levy

For Period 2, the figures below reflect the position at 31/03/2026. The collection rate of 80.4% reflects 1 months of Period 2. BID bills were issued as planned on 1 December 2025 with an annual billing period of 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026. Recovery actions continue as scheduled.



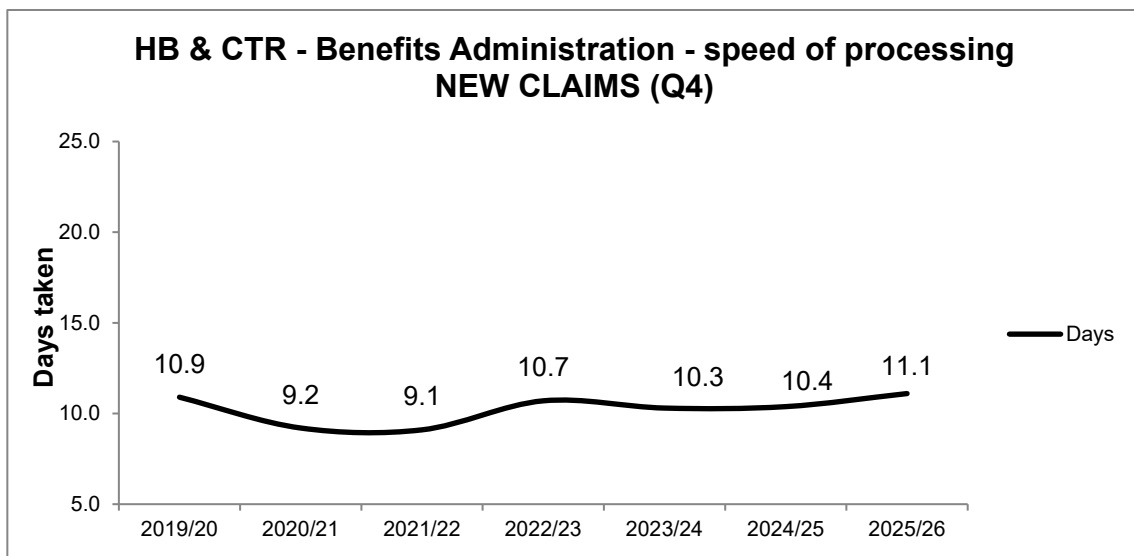
13. Single Grant Applications (SGA)

- 13.1 The Business Support team provides support for all Clusters, including the Community Development team, in the administrative process for SGAs.

13.2 180 SGAs were received during Q4, 2025/26 of which 99.07% were processed within the 5 days target. The comparable figures for Q4 2024/25 were 158 applications with a performance figure of 100%, demonstrating the continued high and improving performance.

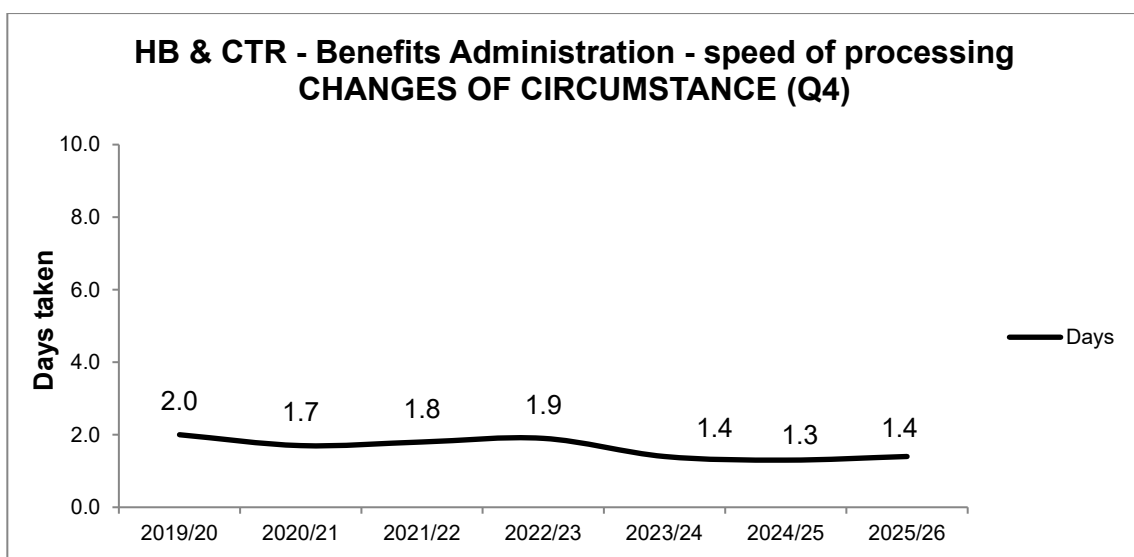
Single Grant Applications – Annual figure						
Percentage logged, acknowledged & distributed within 5 days target						
2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	24/25	25/26
98.9%	99.2%	97.1%	97.8%	99.8%	99.4%	99.6%

13.3 **Speed of processing performance: Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction**



13.4 This performance of 11.1 days for Q4, compares with 10.4 days in the same period in the prior year, reflecting a slight decrease in performance. New claims accounts for less than 5% of all processing work with the remainder on change in circumstances which is discussed further below.

13.5



- 13.6 Performance of 1.4 days for Q4 2025/26 demonstrates the Council's commitment to ensuring the right amount of benefit is paid to the right people, at the right time, while also effectively managing increasing volumes of work. The volumes behind these statistics have seen a notable increase.
- 13.7 95.59% of all Q4 benefit-related work are Changes in Circumstances. Prompt processing of Changes in Circumstances supports the Welfare Budget, and in particular, the Housing Benefit budget, as the overall value of benefit overpayments created are lower than would otherwise be the case, enabling more successful recovery of overpaid benefits and therefore a lower Bad Debt Provision.
- 13.8 The latest statistics published by the DWP for Housing Benefit relates to Q3, and reports that the Highland Council was ranked 4th for New Claims and ranked 1st for Changes in Circumstances in Scotland.
- 13.9 Officers continue to collaborate with UK Government, Scottish Government and CoSLA to develop and progress welfare-related matters.
- 13.10 ***Income Maximisation and Financial Resilience***
The Revenues & Commercialisation team is now utilising intelligent data analytics software to help maximise residents' income and reduce their costs. Data analytics are being used to analyse, identify, engage and track financially vulnerable households to help maximise income and avoid costs by preventing vulnerability and to quickly identify and obtain insights about households who may need support. This service is being delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice and aims to improve residents' financial resilience and reduce poverty gaps by using independent data-led evidence.
- 13.11 At the same time, and integral to the Council's commitment to reduce poverty and alleviate financial hardships, the Council has launched a Better Off Calculator on its website at <https://www.highland.gov.uk/benefits-money-help/find-benefits-may-entitled>. This calculator enables residents to check entitlements that may be available to them, and to understand the impacts of life events, changing working hours, and other circumstances which may impact their income.

14. Climate Change/Carbon Clever

- 14.1 A framework agreement for second-hand and recycled domestic furniture and the provision of new goods supports delivery of the Scottish Welfare Fund as reported in the Welfare Budget. For the period January-March 2026 over 12.68 tonnes of waste were diverted from landfill, and 33.62 metric tonnes of CO₂e were avoided. (CO₂e, or carbon dioxide equivalent, is a metric used to standardise the measurement of greenhouse gas emissions).

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Corporate

Date: 12/05/2026

Authors: Hannah Kollef, Portfolio Manager
Lucy Lallah, Business Development Lead
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Elaine Barrie, Head of People

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Median absence figures
 Appendix 2 – SPI Invoices

Appendix 1 - Median absence figures

Among employees who were absent, how many days were lost?

Median Number of Days Absent (Employees with >=1 Absence)								
Median Days Lost	Q2 2025/26	Q3 2025/26	Q4 2025/26	Q1 2026/27	Q2 2026/27	Q3 2026/27	Q4 2026/27	Q1 2027/28
Business Solutions	2.00	3.00	2.00					
Corporate Finance	1.50	1.00	4.00					
Legal and Corporate Governance	1.50	3.00	3.00					
HR and Communication	2.00	1.50	2.00					
Revenues and Commercialisation	2.00	2.00	3.00					
Highland Council	3.00	3.00	3.00					

How many days lost per employee?

Median Number of Days Absent per Employee (All Employees)								
Median Days Lost	Q2 2025/26	Q3 2025/26	Q4 2025/26	Q1 2026/27	Q2 2026/27	Q3 2026/27	Q4 2026/27	Q1 2027/28
Business Solutions	0.00	0.00	0.00					
Corporate Finance	0.00	0.00	0.00					
Legal and Corporate Governance	0.00	0.00	0.00					
HR and Communication	0.00	0.00	0.00					
Revenues and Commercialisation	0.00	0.00	0.00					
Highland Council	0.00	0.00	0.00					

Appendix 2 - SPI Invoices

Invoice Payments <10 days																
	21/22	22/23	23/24					24/25					25/26			
Service	Annual	Annual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C&P	76.4	75.9	81.2	90.6	89.2	86.0	86.9	49.7	66.7	52.1	46.5	54.3	53.5	64.9	70.0	69.5
E&L	71.0	74.3	76.9	72.8	77.3	76.3	76.0	68.7	63.7	71.8	72.7	69.7	71.2	68.6	74.1	76.1
HW&SC	78.4	88.5	93.5	90.0	93.0	89.0	91.4	86.2	90.8	91.9	85.3	88.6	87.6	89.9	78.0	76.3
I&E	76.7	82.2	86.9	85.7	86.1	82.5	85.3	70.7	77.0	81.2	78.9	76.8	78.1	84.8	86.1	85.3
P&G	81.3	86.9	93.4	90.8	83.2	79.3	86.4	81.3	79.8	82.6	56.9	75.9	83.6	82.1	85.4	84.5
P&H	62.8	48.2	55.4	72.3	56.0	49.0	59.6	31.0	64.0	52.5	55.0	52.8	54.0	68.8	68.1	60.2
R&F	84.9	92.0	91.1	98.4	91.2	79.3	94.5	43.6	53.7	68.0	57.7	55.4	75.6	78.1	75.5	64.9
ICT	69.9	91.1	95.2	86.8	95.6	91.0	92.1	41.7	60.0	54.8	48.7	51.3	49.1	56.5	78.8	81.4
Capital	70.7	68.9	70.5	71.2	71.4	80.1	72.6	52.3	64.8	67.3	69.5	63.5	66.2	62.0	70.1	70.7
THC	69.3	70.7	72.8	80.9	75.3	69.7	75.1	57.0	68.5	63.8	63.3	63.3	64.7	72.5	72.3	69.6

Invoice Payments <30 days																
	21/22	22/23	23/24					24/25					25/26			
Service	Annual	Annual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C&P	94.9	96.9	97.5	98.4	98.6	96.9	97.9	80.8	88.2	87.9	88.7	86.4	88.2	94.4	91.2	94.4
E&L	91.8	90.8	93.4	88.8	92.3	92.1	91.8	89.2	82.7	90.0	90.7	88.6	91.2	86.6	91.3	92.7
HW&SC	94.9	97.2	98.6	97.9	98.5	97.5	98.1	96.4	95.8	97.5	97.2	96.8	97.0	97.4	96.8	95.9
I&E	96.1	97.0	97.8	97.7	96.8	95.1	96.8	90.3	93.5	95.9	94.8	93.6	93.3	95.5	97.0	98.1
P&G	97.1	96.6	98.5	95.4	98.1	94.8	96.9	97.5	97.3	96.5	88.3	95.2	93.3	95.5	96.5	97.2
P&H	93.1	93.6	93.0	97.5	94.8	91.2	94.4	85.8	94.4	93.9	94.4	92.9	94.3	96.8	95.9	96.3
R&F	98.3	98.4	98.8	99.5	98.1	98.5	99.2	79.9	88.3	96.4	93.3	89.1	96.9	95.4	94.3	95.1
ICT	95.5	96.8	98.8	98.9	99.1	99.2	99.0	76.7	86.9	81.0	84.0	82.3	92.0	94.2	97.0	91.5
Capital	93.2	92.8	95.4	94.1	93.0	95.6	94.7	87.4	92.3	94.6	93.2	92.0	93.5	92.6	93.7	94.7
THC	93.8	94.6	95.1	96.7	95.6	93.6	95.3	87.7	91.4	92.9	92.9	91.4	93.0	94.8	94.3	95.2